

**Draft Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on Thursday 11 September 2008 at the Council Offices, Monkton Park, Chippenham, commencing at 7.00pm in Committee Rooms A, B and C, Level - 1.**

**Present:**

Councillor C Reid (Chair)

Councillors CJ Caswill, PCB Coleman, PR Darby, PJ Doyle, J Hartless, AK Hill, SG Parker, N Phillips, ML Singlehurst and JPSS Thomson

**Other Members Present:**

Councillors S Doubell, E Marston, A Phillips and R Sanderson

**Officers Present:**

C Couzins-Short (Cleaving and Amenities Lead Officer), J Densham (Democratic Services Assistant), P Jeremiah (Monitoring Officer), L Robertson (Head of Policy and Performance) and M Todd (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

**O33. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Tonge.

**O34. Membership**

No changes to membership were received.

**O35. Public Question Time/Receipt of Petitions**

No public questions or petitions were received.

**O36. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 July 2008 were considered.

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 July 2008 be signed as a correct record.

**O37. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**O38. Chair's Announcements**

The Chair requested that the Action Report be considered with the Programme of Work item and that the report on the role of Overview and Scrutiny in a Demising

Authority be considered after the officers' reports. The Leader's Update was cancelled due to the Leader not being able to attend the meeting.

### **O39. Effectiveness of Spending in Cleansing and Amenities**

Consideration was given to Report No.10, circulated at the meeting, which set out the effectiveness of spending taking place within Cleansing and Amenities.

Items discussed included:

- The cost of improvements has been met from existing budgets;
- There will be a two to three year period before alternate weekly collections could be introduced in districts where currently there are none. The new Bring Sites and the autumn recycling road-shows are an introduction to this process. Unification of collections will also be delayed due to the varying contracts currently in place across the authorities;
- The Council is working closely with Wiltshire County Council to combine main road litter-picking with verge cutting;
- Alternate Weekly Collections would be a decision for the new Wiltshire Council;
- There is a meeting next week to consider use of the S106 monies set aside for grounds' maintenance;
- Staff shortages in the vehicle maintenance sections cannot be rectified by sharing resources with County as the vehicle types differ too widely; and
- Local people should be encouraged to use the Council's Bring Sites rather than Hills' Recycling Centres if the Council wants to improve its own performance figures.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

### **O40. Affordable Housing Progress Report**

Consideration was given to Report No.11 (circulated with the agenda) which provided a summary of the effect of the Revised Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The report concludes that the Revised SPD has seen improvements in the delivery of affordable housing provision from small rural developments. The Committee also considered a request from the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Transition Board Housing Task Group who had made a request to the Implementation Executive to ensure the delivery of affordable housing under the new Council.

Items discussed included:

- The SPD has had an effect on small scale developments resulting in an increase in the provision of affordable housing.

**Resolved** to

- 1 Accept the conclusions of the report with no recommendations for any amendments to the Revised Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document; and
- 2 That the Head of Policy and Performance liaise with the Housing Manager to provide a response to the JOSTB Housing Task Group.

**O41. Transitional Corporate Plan Update – First Quarter 2008/09**

Consideration was given to Report No.12, circulated with the agenda, which provided an update and exceptions report on the delivery and performance of the Transitional Corporate Plan for the first quarter of 2008/09.

Items discussed included:

- Perceptions regarding anti-social behaviour measures control the statistics;
- Expressions of interest in the Bath Road site are due by 19 September 2008 and a short-list will be created by 9 October 2008;
- There were concerns that insufficient consultation had taken place regarding the Bath Road site;
- Some Chippenham residents were unhappy that that it had been reported that they had rejected the parking permit scheme when many had supported it;
- The communications work is well underway for the new Customer Contact Centres; and
- Services are to report to the Implementation Executive when amalgamation has taken place, for example, the Elections team.

**Resolved that**

- 1 Overview and Scrutiny note the final quarter exception reporting for delivery and performance of actions under the priority areas in the Corporate Plan;
- 2 The Legal Service Manager circulate to the Committee an update on the Bath Road development;
- 3 The wording in the Transitional Corporate Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter) be amended to show that there was 'insufficient support for the parking permit scheme'; and
- 4 The Customer Contact Centre Manager to contact Cllr Caswill regarding Chippenham's Customer Contact Centre.

**O42. The North Wiltshire Local Development Framework, the future Wiltshire-wide LDF and the South West Regional Spatial Strategy – An Update**

Consideration was given to Report No. 13, circulated with the agenda, which provided information on the progress of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and where and how members will be involved in determining the location of residential development over the next year given the current suspension of the LDF.

Items discussed included:

- The Transitional Regulations are still in draft form;
- The RSS consultation will end on 24 October;
- The decision on the location of new houses is subject to the core strategy of the new Council and is critically important for the people of Chippenham;
- The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA) will give an indication of where sites should be found;
- Residents of Chippenham should consider talking with planners and their local town councils; and
- The Implementation Executive will continue this work once the Regulations are made.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

**O43. Role of Overview and Scrutiny in a Demising Authority**

Consideration was given to Report No. 9, circulated with the agenda, which analysed the likely role of NWDC Overview and Scrutiny in the remaining months of the existence of NWDC and made recommendations on future Overview and Scrutiny arrangements. There will be no changes to the normal 'call-in' arrangements.

Items discussed included:

- JOSTB has a much larger scrutiny role and should be where members take their concerns. JOSTB are looking to support more task groups focussed on One Council scrutiny;
- While the role of local scrutiny is diminishing, there is concern that local performance should continue to be scrutinised in order to fulfil North Wiltshire District Council's responsibilities to its residents;
- The NWDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee should receive the minutes from all JOSTB meetings;
- The diarised meetings should be kept but not necessarily held;
- By January, staff structures will be far more Unitary shaped; and

- Members are also becoming increasingly committed to their Unitary work.

**Resolved to**

- 1 To hold one further Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 15 January 2009 to formally close the business of the Committee, subject to the proviso that the other programmed meetings should be kept available to deal with any issue not otherwise associated with the transition to One Council;
- 2 The normal 'call-in' arrangements will remain unchanged;
- 3 The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Transition Board be advised of the content of the report and this decision; and
- 4 The Head of Scrutiny at WCC be requested to regularly send the Committee a link to the JOSTB agendas and minutes.

Note: Councillors Caswill and Darby requested that their votes against the decision be recorded in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 20.5.

**O44. CCTV Task and Finish Group**

Consideration was given to an oral update by the Chair of the CCTV Task and Finish Group.

Items discussed included:

- That given the differing County-wide practises, CCTV should be treated as a matter of urgency by the new Council;
- There is a WCC officer-led working group now considering the issues of systems, funding and monitoring; and
- The Committee thanked Councillor Singlehurst for his research on this subject.

**Resolved** that the CCTV reports and papers be sent to the Implementation Executive, JOSTB and the WCC working group.

**O45. Car Parking Charges Task & Finish Group**

Consideration was given to Report No.15, circulated on 9 September, which presented the final report of the task group.

Items discussed included:

- That the process of interviews with the stakeholders in market towns had encouraged lively debate;
- The evidence from Cricklade, not directly considered by the Task and Finish Group, to be included in the report before it is presented to the Implementation Executive and JOSTB; and
- The Committee thanked Councillor Reid and the group for their excellent research on this subject.

**Resolved** that

- 1 The report be noted; and
- 2 The report be forwarded to the Implementation Executive and JOSTB for consideration.

#### **O46. Action Report**

Consideration was given to Report No. 7, circulated with the agenda, which provided an update on actions from the meeting held on 17 July 2008.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

#### **O47. A Programme of Work for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Consideration was given to Report No. 16, circulated with the agenda, which set out the Committee's work programme for 2008/09. The latest version of the Executive Work Plan was attached to the agenda as Appendix 1.

Items discussed included:

- Much of the Work Programme has now been completed; and
- The Audit Commission recommendations on leisure centres are now to be picked up by the Implementation Executive.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

#### **O48. Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board Update**

The Chair gave an oral update on the main issues discussed at the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Transition Board (JOSTB) meeting on 29 August 2008.

Items discussed included:

- The new Council will be expected to deliver to DCLG the projected savings promised in its' Unitary bid;

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- A Service Director's handbook has been published outlining desired behaviours;
- The financial update circulated with the JOSTB agenda was unsatisfactory as it contains no figures;
- Consideration of the Waste Task Group's interim report has been postponed to the next meeting;
- The Rural Unitary Task Group's final report had been well-received; and
- Councillor Hill is to recommend at the next JOSTB meeting that an electronic staff directory for the new authority be made available.

The meeting finished at 9.25pm.

There were 0 members of the public present.